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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001635

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SUBJECT: SLM ADVANCE TEAM PROVIDES UPDATE

Classified By: P/E Chief E. Whitaker, Reason: Section: 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: The SLM advance team, now in place in Khartoum, numbers around 112 individuals. Chairman Abdul Karim noted its efforts to propagate the Darfur Peace Agreement and welcomed U.S. Government efforts to advance its implementation. The SLM seeks African Union support for the process, and has established commissions to organize itself for the next steps. The SLM requested office supplies and equipment, and a medical clinic. Finally, SLM Secretary General Tereib has joined the advance team; he said that Minni Minawi has decided to put forth his own name to serve as Senior Assistant to the President. End summary.

SLM Advance Team Seeks Progress in DPA Implementation

¶2. (C) On July 4, Pol/Econ Chief and Pol/Econ Officer met with 10 representatives of the SLM/Minni Minawi advance team in Khartoum at the Green Village Hotel. The advance delegation chair, Bakhit Abdul Karim, welcomed the visit and invited ongoing dialogue. He expressed appreciation for the U.S. Government's role in the Abuja peace talks, and the personal involvement of the Deputy Secretary. Abdul Karim, however, also indicated disappointment at the apparent withdrawal by the international community on commitments to the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA); the absence of efforts encourages those who did not sign the agreement, weakening it. He said that the SLM was undertaking several practical steps toward DPA implementation, including:

- implementing the ceasefire agreement in all areas;
- telling Darfurians about the DPA;
- opening roads and allowing the free passage of relief goods;
- pursuing peaceful coexistence, and interaction among Darfurians;
- holding ceremonies to celebrate the agreement; and
- sending the advance delegation to Khartoum to hold meetings with representatives of the GNU, joint committees, embassies, non-governmental organizations, citizens, and political parties.

SLM Pleased with USG Efforts, Seeks Continued Dialogue

¶3. (C) In response, Pol/Econ Chief outlined USG-supported efforts to establish DPA Implementation Offices both in Khartoum and El Fasher, the role of the Security Advisor to Minni Minawi, meetings with the SLM Secretary General and SPLM representatives in El Fasher, participation in the

Darfur Joint Assessment Mission workshop in Nairobi, frequent consultations with the GNU and other donors, and the upcoming pledging conferences in Brussels and the Netherlands. Abdul Karim was pleased to hear of these activities, and requested ongoing dialogue about further efforts to support DPA implementation.

SLM Looks for AU Role; Outlines DPA Implementation Plans

¶4. (C) Information Committee Head Saifaldin Haroun, who had served as translator for the Chair, added that the SLM had found African Union (AU) offices to be empty and tangible AU support lacking (Note: a reference to the departure of AU staff to attend the Banjul Peace and Security Council meeting and AU Summit. End note.) He believed that the DPA implementation timetables were in need of renewal, and that the AU needed to serve as its guarantor. Human Rights Advisor Zanoun Tijane welcomed the discussion, and said it would be important to work with the U.S. Government in establishing effective specialized DPA commissions, while continuing to press the JEM and SLM/Abdel Wahid factions to sign the DPA. He said the SLM/Minni Minawi faction's philosophy is to hold to a ceasefire, build a peace process step by step, and start a dialogue with all stakeholders. Regarding international community support for the DPA, he thinks all consultations should involve the SLM and select targets from within the SLM/Abdel Wahid faction to persuade to support the DPA. He questioned the will, experience, and ability of the AU to serve as an effective DPA implementing force.

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SLM's Plans for a DPA Roadshow; Forms Internal Organs

¶5. (C) Abdul Karim said that after providing an orientation to the DPA, the SLM plans to move to cities and areas under government control in Darfur to hold workshops on the DPA. He said that the SLM had formed several commissions (media/information, legal, fiscal, security, DPA implementation, and administrative bodies) to organize itself to move ahead with DPA implementation and to assume seats through power sharing arrangements. Others commented that the SLM is still working on names of those who would serve on the various DPA committees and commissions.

¶6. (C) Abdul Karim said that the advance team involved roughly 90 individuals. Accommodations were sufficient, he said, although he was not aware that the GNU was providing any further support. He said that the SLM needed office supplies and equipment, to include Internet access, and a medical clinic.

Dismissal of SLM Spokesman Confirmed; Hussein Now Acting

¶7. (C) When asked about the recent dismissal of SLM spokesman al-hajj, he stated that al-Hajj had chosen to offer his personal views from abroad. No longer following SLM decisions made in Sudan, the Secretary General relieved al-Hajj of his post and asked him to return to Sudan within 30 days. Failing to do so will result in his ousting from the movement. In his stead, Mahgoub Hussein will serve as acting spokesman.

Minni Minawi to Seek Post as Senior Advisor to President

¶8. (C) On July 10, post learned from SLM contacts that SLM Secretary General Tereib had just arrived in Khartoum from El

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Fasher, and had said that Minni Minawi had agreed to put his name forward to serve as Senior Assistant to the President.

HUME